Loans to Newspapers for modernisation and expansion

*98. SHRI T. CHANDRASEKHAR REDDY:

SHRI CHANDRIKA PRASAD TRIPATHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any guidelines to the Reserve Bank, various financial institutions and nationalised banks to give term loans to the newspaper industry for modernisation of equipment and for expansion;

(b) if so, what are the details of the guidelines issued in this regard;

(c) whether those guidelines are being followed by the above institutions and if so, what was the quantum of financial assistance rendered to the various groups of newspapers, newspaper-wise, during the last two years; and

(d) whether it is a fact that financial institutions refuse to give refinance to the nationalised banks which are prepared to give term-loans to newspapers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) Government have not issued any guidelines to Reserve Bank of India/financial institutions/nationalised banks regarding term loans to newspaper industry.

As per the extent policy all-India term lending financial institutions, do not extend direct rupee loans to large projects engaged in printing and publishing of newspapers. However, the institutions do extend facility of foreign currency loans to such projects for import of machinery. As regards indirect assistance, Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has issued guidelines to primary lending institutions in March, 1985 that assistance to units engaged in printing and publishing of newspapers may be extended, subject to these units meeting the usual norms and guidelines under IDBI's Refinance Scheme for the following purposes:—

(i) Modernisation / replacement needs of existing units under Bills Rediscounting Scheme and/or Refinance Scheme; and

(ii) Assistance to small viable projects in the industry under refinance scheme for new units as well as expansion of existing units;

Reserve Bank of India has reported that during the period 1st July, 1986 30th June, 1988, in respect of parties with aggregate term loans, deferred payment guarantees. etc. exceeding Rs. 1 crore, it has authorised banks to give a total of Rs. 8.49 crores by way of term loans and Rs. 4.54 crores by way of deferred payment guarantees. According to IDBI, all-India term lending institutions have not extended any direct financial assistance to newspapers during the last 2 years. However, IDBI has extended refinance assistance to units engaged in printing and publication of newspapers during 1986-87 and 1987-88 totalling rupees 8.25 crores and 5.06 crores respectively.

(d) IDBI has reported that it has not refused refinance assistance to credit institutions against their term loans to small newspaper units which are otherwise eligible n terms of guidelines issued to the primary lenders.

Setting up of environment courts

*99. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a growing demand for the setting up of environment courts or tribunals to enable speedy disposal of environment-related cases;